The author of this article, one in a continuing series, Farley Mowat first won literary acknowledgement for his "People of the Deer," a best-seller. That was ten years ago. Ever since he has been waging a determined campaign to improve the lot of the Arctic Innuit, to bring him, in fact, equality with other Canadians. He is writing another book on what he terms the scandalous treatment of the Innuit by Canadian authorities, missionaries and traders. These articles are a sort of preview.

By FARLEY MOWAT

CANADA'S ESKIMOS STILL LIVE Behind Chill Barrier

ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS which strikes the disinterested visitor to the North is the barrier which separates him from the Eskimos.

He finds a people who have been in contact with western civilization for 300 years (in close contact for a century) but with whom there is still no common means of intercommunication and very little common ground of any kind.

Excepting the Mackenzie Eskimos, less than 4 per cent of the balance of the Innuit can speak, or understand (let alone write) English or French, the two principal languages of Canada.

Why is this so? Can it be that the Eskimo has not wanted to become conversant with the outside world?

On the contrary, wherever he has had the opportunity, Inuk has learned our language and our ways avidly.

The real answer to the question lies in the fact that the Innuit have been denied the chance to establish communication with their fellow Canadians.

Until 1954 all Eskimo schooling was in the hands of missiontry organizations. This was a convenient way for the federal government to avoid its responsibilities to the Eskimos in the field of education.

It was not a cheap way though, for through the past several decades the mission schools have been heavily subsidized by the federal authorities.

They were subsidized—but they were subject to no supervision (physical conditions in some of these residential schools were extremely primitive) nor were they asked to follow any syllabus or curriculum set by the government.

They were free to do almost as they pleased.

The result was that less than 14 per cent of Eskimo children had access to any kind of education and these few received little but religious teaching.

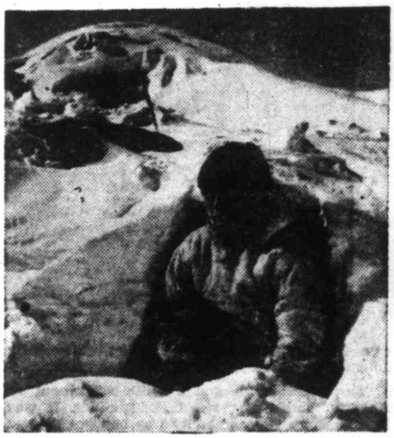
NO REAL ATTEMPT was made to teach them French or English as a second language (in fact, in most of these schools only Eskimo was spoken by pupils and teachers alike).

They were taught nothing which might have fitted them for the inevitable adaptation to our general way of life.

It was intended that these children would go back to a hunting and trapping existence apparently in the belief that anything which might tempt them to give up this ancestral way of living was wrong and could have no place in the schools.

In 1955 when the Oblate Order opened a new residential schol at Chesterfield Inlet, they wrote of their intentions in their magazine called Eskimo as follows: "By and large, good native education should be concerned with perfecting the native way of life in the face of the inevitable contact with the outside world . . . for example the boys will be taught trapping, fishing and ivory-carving . . . for the girls it will be sewing and preparation of hides."

Apart from ensuring that the Eskimo remained an Eskimo—and nothing else, there was a useful secondary result to this kind of pseudo-education.



His home is buried in a snowdrift, but Inuk is philosophical. He grins at the novelty of a cameraman. Generally, his is a cheerful disposition. But Author Mowat contends he has been shabbily treated by Canada, points to the example of Greenland in the care and education of these hardy, intelligent peoples.

SINCE THE ESKIMOS could not speak our languages, anyone who was interested in them had to learn their tongue. This meant that the missionaries, the traders, and some of the RCMP, plus a handful of scientists and explorers, were able to set themselves up as the Voice of the Eskimo, and to speak for him in all matters.

These people could not easily be contradicted, least of all by the Eskimo himself.

It was a position of great strength.

It was one of the major reasons why it was possible for the Eskimos to suffer without much knowledge of their suffering ever reaching our ears.

Cut off from western thought and ideas (except as these were carefully selected, and interpreted by the missionaries); cut off from having any voice in their own destiny; cut off, in fact, from the rest of humanity by the arbitrary action of a handful of Europeans, the Eskimo of the Canadian Arctic had no choice but to remain alien to our society.

Yet, while this was the state of things in Canada, it was quite different in nearby Greenland.

There—as long ago as 1850—100 per cent of the Eskimo population was literate. They had a Roman-style alphabet which was adaptable to the literature of the west, and which was an efficient vehicle for the expression of the ideas and desires of the Eskimos themselves.

Most Greenlanders, as they call themselves, are today better read than many southern Canadians.

NO ONE TRIED TO wall the Greenlander in behind the glaciers of his own land, on the contrary, Europeans opened the door to the world for him and gave him the chance — which he took with alacrity—of becoming a citizen of the world.

Is there any hope that our frozen Arctic schools will be thawed out? Since 1954 the federal government has purchased most of the mission schools and now pays all maintenance costs as well as teachers' salaries.

However, many of these schools are still taught and controlled by the members of religious orders who were originally in control. Full state subsidy of secular schools is a fact in the Mackenzie District.

Nevertheless the Department of Northern Affairs is making a strong effort to bring about changes that have meaning and that are not just subterfuges whereby the old system can be perpetuated.

A new curriclum is being prepared which must be adhered to by all subsidized schools. This will be standard in the new day-schools the department is establishing as fast as it can get the money for them.

Even the teachers in the subsidized schools may have to meet the minimum qualifications demanded of teachers in the rest of Canada.

This revolution in Inuk's educational opportunities is not happening without a struggle. Those organizations which benefited from subsidies in the past and which had complete control over the schools, are unhappy about the change.

What education will accomplish for Inuk is to help to free him from the intellectual and physical confinement in which he has suffered for more than a century?

If such freedom is bad for him, then it is bad for all of us.

EXPERTS TEST WEED CONTROLS

SINCE loganberries are a crop which occupies the land for many years it is inevitable that weedy growth, including both annual and perennial weeds and grasses become a problem. Within the plant row in particular, it is very difficult if not impossible to cultivate with the conventional equipment, and to keep weed growth under control here usually means a great deal of hand work.

During the last two years experiments have been conducted to determine whether it is possible to eliminate this unwanted vegetation by means of chemical sprays, without injury to the loganberries. Preliminary work in 1957 indicated that early spring applications of dalapon and amino triazole held some promise, and further evidence of this was obtained during the 1958 season.

Treatments in 1958 were applied on May 6, when the new cane growth was 12 to 18 inches in height. A hand compression sprayer was used and chemicals sprayed in water solution in an 18-inch band to both sides of the row, the spray pattern from either side just meeting between the plants. There was a heavy infestation of perennial rye and annual blue grass up to 14 inches in height, a moderate to heavy infestation of common chickweed and a scattering of other weeds, both annual and perennial.

Of seven different treatments applied a combination of dalapon and amino triazole at 5 and 2 pounds of active ingredient per acre, respectively, gave good control until the very dry summer weather reduced the chances of any further weed growth. These rates were on the basis of area applied. In this case an 18-inch band to either side of the row only was treated, so that where rows are nine feet apart, this would represent only one third of the total area. On a one-acre planting, therefore, only one third of the amounts of active ingredient mentioned would have been used. This treatment, in view of the good control of the weedy growth present and lack of any serious injury, was the most promising of those applied. It should be emphasized, however, that these were preliminary results only and do not constitute a recommendation.

Dalapon at the rates of 10 pounds of active ingredient per acre and over affected new cane growth, and new leaves were small and puckered. Amino triazole resulted in early injury symptoms, with bleached-out areas, typical of injury from this chemical, appearing on stems and leaves. Except in a few cases, however, where leaves were wetted by the spray, the symptoms were temporary and most of the plants grew out of the condition, with later development appearing quite normal.

Further experiments will be continued and these will include studies to determine the best time of making applications as well as the best chemicals and rates. It would appear, for example, that sprays might be applied more safely before there is any emergence of new cane growth. Whether adequate weed control can be achieved by earlier sprays, however, remains to be determined. In any event, there is an acute problem, with every hope of finding a suitable chemical treatment which will reduce the cost to the loganberry grower of removing the weedy growth which robs the plant of both moisture and plant food.